pass through of international prices of crude oil to domestic consumers, reduction in general CENVAT rate and customs duties, rejuvenation of agriculture under the National Food Security Mission and Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana. The Government has also increased the allocation for infrastructure programmes in the Budget 2008-09, which will help in addressing some of the supply side constraints towards sustaining growth.

Guidelines for recruitment and deployment of banks recovery agents

4195. SHRI B. K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether taking note of increasing instances of incidents of bank's recovery agenst using intimidation and force on unwary defaulters, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has proposed a slew of guidelines for bank's for recruitment and deployment of agents;

(b) if so, whether these include police verification of agent's antecedents and imparting a pre-induction training for at least 100 hours;

(c) what are the other guidelines, the RBI wants the banks to comply with; and

(d) whether those guidelines are applicable to credit card companies and telecom operators?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has issued guidelines on 24th April, 2008 on recovery agents engaged by banks. The RBI has advised the banks to ensure verification of antecedents of employees of recovery agencies engaged by them. Police verifications has been suggested as one of the pre-employment due diligence measures. RBI has also stipulated that all recovery agents should undergo a training-cum-certification programme offered by Indian Institute of Banking and Finance (IIBF). The course prepared by Indian Banks' Association (IBA) and IIBF envisages 100 hours class room training.

(c) and (d) Guidelines have also been issued by RBI to banks on Fair Practice Code for Lenders, regarding outsourcing of financial services, on Credit Card Operations, etc. IBA has also formulated "Model Code for Collection of Dues and repossession of Security", which has been recommended to banks for adoption and implementation. Further, the Code of Banks' Commitments to customers formulated by Banking Codes and Standards Boards of India provides, *inter-alia*, that the collection policy by the bank be built on courtesy fair treatment and persuasion and the bank follows security repossession policy in consonance with the law.

These guidelines are applicable to all Commercial Banks including Credit Card Companies set up by banks. Telecom borrowers are not covered by these guidelines.

Selling of shares of BALCO

†4196. MISS ANUSUIYA UIKEY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a single private company has bought 51 per cent shares of Bharat Aluminium Company Ltd. (BALCO) a public sector company recently;

(b) if so, the name of that company and whether it is an Indian Company or a foreign one;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.